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NEWS RELEASE

April 24, 2008

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MUSEUM EXHIBITS WORKS OF MAJOR AMERICAN MODERNISTS

MISSOULA—

“The Poindexter Collection,” an exhibition of American modernist artworks on loan from the Montana Historical Society, will be at the Montana Museum of Art & Culture at The University of Montana from May 6 through Aug. 16.

The exhibition will be in the museum’s Meloy and Paxson galleries, located in UM’s Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center.

Everton Gentry “George” Poindexter was a Montana native, a UM alumnus (1918-20) and a New York commodities broker. He and his wife, Elinor, an art dealer, amassed nearly 500 artworks by some of America’s most important post-war era painters, including Willem De Kooning, Arshile Gorky, Franz Kline, Richard Diebenkorn, Jackson Pollock and Robert deNiro Sr.

The collection offers a remarkable range of subject and style, from completely abstract works of George McNeil and still lifes of Manoucher Yektaï to the figurative works of Richard Diebenkorn and others.

The Poindexters donated a large part of their collection to the Montana Historical Society in Helena and to the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings in memory of George’s father and grandfather. His father, Joseph Boyd Poindexter, was a Montana attorney general,

and his maternal grandfather, Everton Judson Conger, was a Montana circuit judge. It was Poindexter's wish to make important American art trends of the 1940s through 1960s accessible to all Montanans.

The collection represents two major painting characteristics of the New York School: Abstract Expressionism, also called action painting, and Color Field painting. Abstract Expressionists emphasized open, expressive painterly gestures created with emotional intensity. Many of these artists were influenced by the automatist painting technique and abstract forms of European Surrealists exiled in New York. Viewing the painting as a spontaneous improvisation, the Abstract Expressionist favored broad brushstrokes, calligraphic marks, the drip technique and an emphasis on the quality of the paint itself.

Color Field painters primarily worked with large areas of solid color. They concentrated on the overall effect of the painting as a single shape, presenting refined, unified, consistent optical fields.

A free public lecture titled "Abstract Expressionism—Innovations and Traditions" will be presented by MMAC Curator Manuela Well-Off-Man at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 22, in the museum's Meloy Gallery.

MMAC summer gallery hours from May to August are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday. Admission is free, and parking is available near the northwest corner of the PAR/TV Center.

For more information, call 406-243-2019 or go online to <http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum>.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: Digital images of select artwork included in the exhibition are available upon request by calling 406-243-2019.

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